

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, PINS, GW

SUBJECT: POLITICAL TERRORISM IN THE FRG: THE BUNDES-
TAG DEBATE

REF: BONN 18677, DEC 3, 1974; 19034, DEC 10, 1974;
3584; 3895

SUMMARY: THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE MARCH 13 ON INTERNAL
SECURITY BEGAN ON A RESPONSIBLE NOTE WITH THE GOVERN-
MENT STATEMENT BY CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT. A BUSINESS-LIKE
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TONE CONTINUED THROUGH THE MORNING WHEN, AMONG OTHERS,

CDU LEADER KOHL AND SPD LEADER BRANDT SPOKE. LATER, HOWEVER, THE DEBATE BECAME MORE HEATED AND AN EXCHANGE BETWEEN HERBERT WEHNER AND FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS LED TO THE CDU/CSU WALKING OUT OF THE BUNDESTAG. THE SESSION RESUMED AFTER A FORTY MINUTE INTERRUPTION AND WAS CONCLUDED SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A FEW CDU/CSU PROPOSALS TO CHANGE THE CRIMINAL CODE AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S SUGGESTION THAT THE CREATION OF A NATIONAL POLICE ORGANIZATION MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO COPE WITH TERRORISM IN THE FUTURE, MOST OF THE DEBATE WAS NOT ADDRESSED TO SOLVING THE TERRORISM PROBLEM BUT CONSISTED OF CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES ABOUT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS. KOHL MADE A FAVORABLE IMPRESSION IN HIS FIRST SPEECH BEFORE THE BUNDESTAG, WHICH SHOULD ENHANCE HIS CHANCES IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE NOMINATION. KOHL'S ENERGETIC BUT MODERATE APPROACH WAS IN STARK CONTRAST TO STRAUSS' BLISTERING ATTACK AGAINST THE SPD. IN SUM, THE DEBATE CREATED MORE HEAT THAN LIGHT IN SOLVING THE DILEMMA POSED FOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC BY POLITICAL TERRORISM. END SUMMARY

1. IN AN EFFORT TO DEFUSE THE ISSUE, CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT OPENED THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE MARCH 13 WITH A BALANCED AND STATESMAN-LIKE GOVERNMENT STATEMENT ON INTERNAL SECURITY. SCHMIDT APOLOGIZED FOR SOME COMMENTS HE HAD MADE CONCERNING PETER LORENZ AND SECURITY DURING THE HEAT OF THE BERLIN CAMPAIGN BEFORE LORENZ WAS KIDNAPPED. HE STRESSED THAT THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC IS THE BEST DEMOCRATIC STATE THAT HAS EXISTED IN GERMAN HISTORY AND PRAISED THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE LAENDER ON SECURITY ISSUES. HE ALLUDED TO THE "SPIEGEL" AFFAIR AS AN EXAMPLE WHERE TOO MUCH CENTRALIZATION OF POWER WAS DANGEROUS (READ FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS' ROLE). HE ATTACKED TERRORISM AND THOSE WHO WOULD SYMPATHIZE WITH TERRORISTS AND CALLED FOR FIRMNESS AND FULL PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR COMBATTING TERRORISM.

2. ALFRED DREGGER (HESSE CDU CHAIRMAN) LED OFF THE OPPOSITION'S REPLY TO THE GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEGINNING WITH QUOTATIONS FROM A LAND SPD LEADER'S SYMPATHETIC COMMENTS ABOUT THE GOALS OF ANARCHISM AND A YOUNG DEMOCRATIC (JUDOS, THE YOUTH MOVEMENT ASSOCIATED WITH THE FDP) MOTION AT A RECENT JUDO CONVENTION, WHICH WAS CRITICAL OF SOME OF THE BERLIN POLICE METHODS FOLLOWING THE LORENZ KIDNAPPING, DREGGER ACCUSED THE GOVERNMENT OF HAVING DONE TOO LITTLE TOO LATE TO COMBAT TERRORISM AS WELL AS FOR BEING TOO PER-

MISSIVE IN THE PAST. HE CALLED FOR A TIGHTENING OF THE LAWS CONCERNING DEMONSTRATIONS AND MISUSE OF THE LAWYER-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP IN TERRORISM CASES, AND THE BANNING OF RADICALS FROM PUBLIC SERVICE.

3. BRANDT SPOKE BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE HE HAD RESIGNED AS CHANCELLOR. BRANDT TOOK THE LINE THAT THE SPD WAS THE GREATEST ENEMY OF THE TERRORISTS AND SAID THAT THE SPD'S INTEGRATION OF STUDENT DISSENTERS IN THE LATE 1960'S HAD HELPED TO LIMIT THE GROWTH OF RADICALISM

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IN GERMANY.

4. BRANDT WAS FOLLOWED BY KOHL (AS A MEMBER OF THE BUNDES RAT HE IS PERMITTED TO ADDRESS THE BUNDESTAG) WHO ATTACKED BRANDT, STATING THAT ALL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WERE THE ENEMY OF TERRORISM, NOT JUST THE SPD, AND CRITICIZED STATEMENTS BY BRANDT AND OTHER SPD LEADERS THAT A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN 1976 COULD CREATE SOCIAL UNREST IN GERMANY.
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5. ALTHOUGH THE BRANDT AND KOHL SPEECHES WERE MORE IN THE NATURE OF POLITICAL ORATORY THAN A DISCUSSION OF HOW TO COPE WITH THE QUESTION OF POLITICAL TERRORISM, THE TONE THROUGHOUT THE DEBATE IN THE MORNING, WHICH HAD BEEN SET BY THE CHANCELLOR'S SPEECH, REMAINED RESTRAINED. IN THE AFTERNOON, HOWEVER, THE DEBATE HEATED UP AND LATER TEMPER FLARED AS THE SESSION DRAGGED ON INTO THE NIGHT. STRAUSS SPOKE IN THE EVENING AND MADE AN HOUR LONG BLISTERING ATTACK ON THE SPD IN GENERAL AND WILLY BRANDT IN PARTICULAR. STRAUSS SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THE MAJORITY OF THE SPD AND FDP MEMBERS REPRESENTED THE "DEMOCRATIC SUBSTANCE," THERE WERE MARGINAL GROUPS IN THE PARTIES THAT COULD NOT BE CALLED DEMOCRATIC. HE FURTHER WENT ON TO IDENTIFY THE LEFT WING OF THE SPD WITH THE TERRORISTS, POINTING OUT THAT SOME OF THE TERRORISTS HAD EARLIER BEEN MEMBERS OF THE SPD AND THAT CONVICTED LAWYER HORST MAHLER (ONE OF THE PRISONERS WHO TURNED DOWN THE OFFER TO BE EXCHANGED FOR PETER LORENZ) HAD ONCE DEFENDED WILLY BRANDT'S SON IN COURT.

6. SCHMIDT REPLIED TO STRAUSS, ACCUSING HIM OF ATTEMPTING TO PLAY ON EMOTIONS AND INSECURITY ON THE ISSUE OF INTERNAL SECURITY. THEN WEHNER ACCUSED STRAUSS OF BEING A "TERRORIST IN SPIRIT" AND COMMENTED THAT WHEN STRAUSS HEARD THE WORD MARXISM HE REACTED LIKE GOEBBELS. IN PROTEST, THE CDU/CSU FRAKTION LEFT THE BUNDESTAG, LEAVING TWO PARTY WHIPS BEHIND. WEHNER CONTINUED SPEAKING FOR SOME MINUTES AND ONE OF THE CDU/CSU WHIPS CALLED FOR A RECESS OF HALF AN HOUR WHICH UNDER PARLIAMENTARY COURTESY WAS GRANTED. THE BUNDESTAG RECONVENED AT ABOUT 11:15 P.M. AND AFTER MORE CHARGES AND COUNTERCHARGES THE DEBATE ENDED SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT.

7. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CDU/CSU PROPOSALS FOR AMENDING EXISTING LAWS AND CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT'S SUGGESTION THAT A CENTRALIZED FEDERAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANIZATION MIGHT BE NECESSARY IN THE FUTURE, THE VAST BULK OF THE DEBATE WAS DEVOTED TO POLITICAL POLEMICS AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DID NOT ADDRESS ITSELF TO HOW THE STATE SHOULD COPE WITH POLITICAL TERRORISM. AS TO THE QUESTION OF EXCHANGING PRISONERS FOR HOSTAGES HELD BY TERRORISTS, NO ONE TOOK ISSUE WITH THE HANDLING OF THE LORENZ KIDNAPPING. CDU DEPUTY DREGGER DID POSE THE DILEMMA OF THE SAVING OF HUMAN LIFE VERSUS THE NEED TO PRESERVE STATE AUTHORITY AND SAID THAT MORE THOUGHT HAD TO BE GIVEN TO THE PROBLEM. HE POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT EVEN IF ALL POLITICIANS AGREED NOT TO GIVE IN TO TERRORIST DEMANDS, THE TERRORISTS COULD THEN KIDNAP NON-POLITICIANS AND THE DILEMMA WOULD STILL HAVE TO BE FACED.

8. A RECENT POLL COMMISSIONED BY "SPIEGEL" INDICATED THAT 75 PERCENT OF THE GERMAN PUBLIC SUPPORTED THE DECISION TAKEN IN THE LORENZ CASE, WHILE 24 PERCENT SUPPORTED A TOUGHER POSITION BY THE AUTHORITIES. AT THE SAME TIME, CONCERNING FUTURE POSSIBILITIES, 48 PERCENT SUPPORTED GIVING IN TO DEMANDS IN THE FUTURE AND 51 PERCENT WERE AGAINST GIVING IN. ONLY 38 PERCENT SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF GIVING IN TO TERRORIST DEMANDS FOR THE RELEASE OF ALL BAADER-MEINHOF PRISONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR A POLITICIAN HELD HOSTAGE. SIXTY-ONE PERCENT SAID THAT THEY WERE AGAINST SUCH A DECISION. HOWEVER, WHEN THE QUESTION WAS REWORDED AND THEY WERE ASKED IF THEY WOULD EXCHANGE ALL THE BAADER-MEINHOF PRISONERS IN EXCHANGE FOR A KIDNAPPED "UNKNOWN CITIZEN," 46 PERCENT SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD MEET THE REQUEST AND 57 PERCENT WERE OPPOSED. FIFTY-SEVEN PERCENT OF THOSE QUESTIONED SUPPORTED THE RESUMPTION OF THE DEATH PENALTY IN THE FRG.

9. IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE IS A FEELING OF INSECURITY AMONG THE GERMAN POPULATION AND GENUINE CONCERN ABOUT

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THE POSSIBILITY OF A RENEWED WAVE OF TERRORISM (WHICH IS CERTAINLY NOT HELPED BY UNCERTAINTY AS TO HOW THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO COPE WITH FUTURE INCIDENTS). SOME CHANGES IN THE CRIMINAL CODE ARE LIKELY BUT AS OF NOW IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT PLANS TO PROPOSE SWEEPING MEASURES TO COPE WITH THE PROBLEM. THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE OPPOSITION TO MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL OUT OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY ISSUE IS SIMPLY TOO TEMPTING TO BE RESISTED, BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR HOW IMPORTANT THIS

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ISSUE WILL BE IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS, PARTICULARLY,

IF THERE IS NOT AN OUTBREAK OF NEW TERRORIST ACTS. CDU
AND CSU POLITICIANS HAVE TOLD US THAT
INTERNAL SECURITY
WILL CERTAINLY BE A TOPIC
IN THE LAENDER ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND IN THE 1976
BUNDESTAG ELECTION.

10. THE INTERNAL SECURITY DEBATE HAS
ADDITIONAL DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS BEYOND THE ISSUE ITSELF.
KOHL'S SPEECH BEFORE THE BUNDESTAG WAS GENERALLY REGARDED
AS A SUCCESS. HIS ENERGETIC BUT MODERATE APPROACH, FOR
EXAMPLE, WAS IN CONTRAST TO STRAUSS' EMOTIONAL AND BITTER
ATTACK ON THE SPD. A SOURCE CLOSE TO STRAUSS TOLD US THAT
STRAUSS FEELS HIMSELF UNDER TREMENDOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL
PRESSURE AS A RESULT OF THE THREATS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST
HIMSELF AND HIS FAMILY (HE AND THE FAMILY ARE UNDER
CONSTANT POLICE PROTECTION). THIS STRAIN, OUR SOURCE SAID,
MIGHT DISCOURAGE STRAUSS FROM SEEKING THE CDU/CSU
CHANCELLORSHIP NOMINATION. WHETHER THAT BE THE CASE OR
NOT, IT IS CONCEIVABLE THAT THE PERSONAL STRAIN PLAYED A
ROLE IN STRAUSS' AGGRESSIVE PERFORMANCE YESTERDAY WHICH
IS LIKELY TO CONFIRM HIS REPUTATION AMONG HIS FRIENDS (AS
A FIGHTER FOR LAW AND ORDER WHO IS WILLING TO TAKE ON THE
SPD/FDP COALITION) AND HIS ENEMIES (AS A DANGEROUS
DEMAGOGUE TRYING TO FEED HYSTERIA AMONG THE GERMAN
POPULACE).

11. ALL IN ALL, THE BUNDESTAG DEBATE ON INTERNAL
SECURITY DID NOT CONTRIBUTE VERY MUCH TO HELPING THE
FEDERAL REPUBLIC COME TO GRIPS WITH THIS POLITICAL
PHENOMENON. THIS FACT IS NOT LOST ON THOSE WHO ARE
CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEM AND WHO FEEL THAT GERMAN
POLITICIANS WILL HAVE TO FACE UP TO THEIR RESPONSIBILITY.
IT IS HOPED THAT NOW THAT THE DEBATE IS OVER, MORE
SERIOUS THOUGHT WILL BE GIVEN TO SOLVING THE DILEMMA
AS TO HOW A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC STATE CAN COPE WITH
POLITICAL VIOLENCE CARRIED OUT BY A SMALL GROUP OF
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DEDICATED TERRORISTS WHOSE GOAL IS TO DISCREDIT THE
AUTHORITY OF THE STATE.
HILLENBRAND

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